



photo Joel Priest/Special to the Drum

From left, seniors Jesse Vigil (35), Darrin Lagerstrom (25) and Shane Richmond (10), along with sophomore Clayton Jefferson (11), observe the Senior/Parent Appreciation Night festivities prior to Ignacio's regular-season finale on Valentine's Day against 3A Bayfield. With Richmond ravaging the Wolverines for 34 points, the Bobcats went into this weekend's 2A-District 3 Tournament with a 71-59 victory. Not pictured: Guards Xavier Watts and Matthew Silva also were saluted prior to their final action inside IHS Gymnasium.

Bobcat boys rule SJBL again!

By Joel Priest
Special to the Drum

Even proverbial “trash” found its way into the basket as Shane Richmond cleaned house on Valentine's Day.

Which, in addition to being the Bobcats' regular-season finale, also tripled as Senior/Parent Appreciation Night; Richmond was not about to let Ignacio's local rival spoil the party for himself and classmates Xavier Watts, Matthew Silva, Jesse Vigil and Darrin Lagerstrom.

Having his first three-pointer rejected by Bayfield counterpart Derek Hillyer, Richmond's next attempt — from the same spot — was a no-doubter, putting IHS up 14-5 with 3:15 still left in the first quarter after two previous mid-range hoops. Though BHS rallied back to 16-11 at the period's end and later to 26-21 in the second, they'd never go ahead in a 71-59 loss.

Posting by-frame totals of 9, 6, 11 and 8, Richmond roared loudest with 34 points, besting the Wolverines' top three (Hillyer 12, Cody Rose 11, Tyler Kerr 10) combined. Freshman Adison Jones chipped in 13 points for IHS — which led 34-26 at halftime and 54-46 after three — as well, and more importantly helped Richmond with the defensive task of denying the 6-foot-9 Hillyer space near the rim.

Closing the 2011-12 predetermined slate with a 15-4 overall record and the No. 5 Denver Post/CHSCA ranking in Class 2A entering the postseason, as well as another San Juan Basin League championship, about the only thing that went wrong was the loss of sophomore post Justin Carver to injury with 2:09 left in the third quarter.

It was later determined to be a broken shinbone that will relegate him to morale-boost duty for as long as Ignacio remains in contention for this season's state championship. He finished with two points, while Watts notched nine, sophomore Clayton Jefferson eight, and soph Kelton



photo Joel Priest/Special to the Drum

Firing a fadeaway over Bayfield's Preston Hardy (50), Ignacio freshman Adison Jones (33) books two of his 13 points in the Bobcats' 71-59 non-league Valentine's Day win to close out the regular season.

Richmond five.

Completing an 11-0 pass through the SJBL, Shane Richmond booked 19 points in the Bobcats' 67-45 win over Telluride, but Jones did the most damage with 23. The duo combined to sink nine of IHS's 16-of-21 total at the foul line, as well (Ignacio was 7-of-7 versus Bayfield). Jefferson, confidently triggering the offense, contributed 11 points — a night after netting 20 versus Mancos in a 64-46 win.

Richmond led the way against the Blue Jays with 26 points, including all seven of Ignacio's first-quarter output (MHS managed just six) and 12 in a furious fourth. Watts dropped in eight, with Silva and Kelton Richmond each scoring four.

Tracking the enemies, guard Conner Courter led THS with 13 points — 10 coming in the Miners' first half, which ended with IHS ahead 34-28. Ignacio had led Mancos just 23-20 at intermission, with wing Jake Driver and guard Nigel Henry totaling 11 points apiece, and forward Trey Gordanier eight. Center Roger Liljegren and point guard Fischer Hazen each added nine points for Telluride.

Averaging 64.4 ppg so far in February, the Bobcats will be the undisputed 1-seed at this weekend's District 3 Tournament, held at Montezuma-Cortez HS. Their opening opponent, however, was yet to be finalized prior to deadline on Friday, Feb. 17; THS, MHS, Dolores and Ridgway were all in action late that night.

Girls' regular season ends even

By Joel Priest
Special to the Drum

With Telluride hosting Mancos and Ridgway welcoming Dolores, both games completed late last Friday night, Ignacio — with a 4-4 mark against that quartet — was the only of the San Juan Basin League's 2A sides with its business already concluded.

Fortunately the Valentine's Day defeat came against none of the four, and though it did finalize IHS's regular-season mark at a misleading .500, it reminded the team of where its intensity needs to be in the postseason (the D-3 Tournament is this weekend at Montezuma-Cortez HS). Because for 5:20 of the first, and all 8:00 of the second quarter against Bayfield, Ignacio had its home-court advantage protected.

Five points from junior Valerie Armstrong and two Michelle Simmons free throws had given the ladies a 7-6 lead, but the 3A Lady Wolverines — more apt to capitalize on turnovers than rely on half-court sets during the engagement — went on a 15-0 streak to finish the frame.

But Simmons scored immediately starting the second, and Armstrong followed with a three-point play. Two FT's by senior Kayla Strobel put BHS up 25-14, but IHS fought back to 25-19 via a Sky Cotton three-pointer and Mariah Vigil inside bucket before Strobel (game-high 26 points) booked two more freebies and consecutive transition layups.

The visitors' 31-19 lead grew to 40-25 at halftime — meaning the Lady Cats were outscored just 19-18 in the quarter — after six more Strobel points and a Keenan Moreta charity toss. Bayfield then separated for good with a 17-6 third quarter, en route



photo Joel Priest/Special to the Drum

Freshman Sky Cotton (24) rises and disposes of a shot by Bayfield's Taylor Harrison (2) during Ignacio's Valentine's Day non-league game. The Lady Bobcats clashed fairly evenly with the 3A Lady Wolverines for most of the first half, but took a 72-46 loss to end the regular season.

to a 72-46 win. Simmons and Vigil each scored 10 points for Ignacio (9-9, 7-5 SJBL), but Armstrong was blanked in the second half and finished with eight. Cotton finished with seven in her first Pine River Rivalry game, and sophomore Cloe Seibel added six.

Three days earlier, IHS had sewed up its circuit slate in convincing fashion, 41-21 inside IHS Gymnasium over Telluride. One scary thing to ponder: THS junior

Morgan Mackie registered 21 points in the Lady Miners' 42-41 JV victory, but did not play varsity until the rout's final minute.

Leading 9-4 after one quarter (THS's totals were 4-4-7-6), Armstrong staked IHS to a 17-8 halftime lead with five of her team-high 13 points coming in the half's last 90 seconds. Vigil and junior Pam Cotton then helped slam the door in the fourth with five points each towards the team's 16.

Vigil finished with nine and Cotton seven, while Simmons traded six-for-six with counterpart Emy Ludwig. Senior center Emily Langley led Telluride with eight points, and classmate Sonja Erickson netted five (both she and Ludwig were bageled in the first half, and fellow starter Jo Bush never scored).

Shooting a scorching 11-of-14 from the foul line, Ignacio opened on an 8-0 spree the afternoon before against Mancos, and never looked back in a 67-40 blowout. Lady Jay senior Erica Blackburn prevented a first-quarter shutout, but that 16-2 deficit reached 37-9 — inflated by another 8-0 opening stretch — at halftime (after which IHS's FT accuracy abruptly dipped to 4-of-11).

Ten Vigil points in the third quarter, for all practical purposes, turned out the lights on MHS — despite senior Jacey Cox's sudden eight — as the game went to the fourth standing 55-27.

Pam Cotton led one of the Lady Bobcats' most diverse scoring attacks yet this season with 13 points. Vigil finished with 12, Simmons 11, and Armstrong and Sky Cotton each with 10. Seibel had nine.

Freshman Andie Paschal led Mancos with ten, Cox stayed at eight, Kayla Goff had six and Blackburn five.



photo Joel Priest/Special to the Drum

The only 12th-grader on the Ignacio roster, Nicole Burch stands alongside junior Valerie Armstrong (33) during Senior/Parent Appreciation Night festivities on Valentine's Day. The Lady Bobcats battled non-league 3A Bayfield in their regular-season finale, but fell 72-46.

Pena outdone in historic outro • from page 1

loose” kid knew not his immediate, post-IHS athletic choices.

“Haven’t talked to anyone about wrestling [in] college,” said Pena, who didn’t exactly rule out the option, nor a possible shift into the mixed-martial arts scene, but who appeared most ready to simply resume high school for a few more pre-diploma months.

Still among a group of three-time champs numbering less than 100 and able to stay driven just to reach a fourth grand finale, there’s no reason Alex Pena or anyone near him should be disappointed.

Bobcats take 14th overall

Among Pena's teammates, an ironman-style season ended short of expectations for Teagan Overturf.

Few 42-match winners ever end on the outer edge of the Colorado State Wrestling Championships' podium, but after scrapping through his 54th match of 2011-12, the IHS senior was stopped for good in Denver in the fifth-place match at 160 pounds.

Burned by a controversial stall-point ruling after previously staving off elimination twice,

Overturf had a last chance to medal. But Custer County (Westcliffe) senior Jack Woods denied Overturf fifth place in a repeat of Overturf's undoing at the 2A-Region II Championships, though not before he earned IHS team points with a 32-second pin of Wray's Alex Merritt and a 4-3 win over Paonia's Kyler Bear leading to a disputed 6-5 loss to Rocky Ford's Chris Robinson. Akron's Jourdan Hottinger had first demoted Overturf from the winners' bracket via an 8-3 decision.

With seniors Colton Wyatt and

Pena also placing on Day 3, Ignacio finished in 14th place overall, matching Swink with 48 points. Paonia's Eagles flew away with top honors, racking up 179 points to blow away runner-up Baca County (Springfield/Vilas) by 63.5. RFHS (109.5), Fowler (99) and Burlington (84.5) rounded out the top five.

Wyatt's bid for a title at 195 was canceled in the quarterfinals, 12-9, by Byers' Jacob Linnebur, but Wyatt recovered with a 91-second pin of Wray's Matt Sullivan and followed by sticking

Holyoke's Jesus Hermosillo 35 seconds into the third period.

But his shot to make the third-place match disappeared underneath the torso of a familiar foe: Norwood senior Jaron Ragsdale, initially seeded at the top end of the bracket. Controlling Wyatt virtually from start to finish, Ragsdale went for the pin instead of a technical fall (he led 12-2 at the time), and stuck IHS's senior 1:33 into the third.

Finishing his final year 29-7, Wyatt defeated Lutheran (Parker) senior Zach Parker for fifth.

Ignacio senior 132-pounder Jeff Herrera's final go-round unfortunately ended 21-17 after straight starts — pinned by Yuma's Alex Klopp in an elapsed 5:23, and then defeated 7-3 by Hayden's Journey Freeman.

And at 170, freshman Blaine Mickey met a similar 0-2 fate — pinned in 26 seconds by eventual champ Brent Harris of Norwood, and eliminated by pin in 2:09 courtesy Peyton's Rich Lancaster — but should be able to use the experience of a 5-28 season to develop in 2012-13 as IHS' lone state returnee.